

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 COPENH 00139 01 OF 02 161741Z

51

ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05

CIAE-00 PRS-01 EB-03 L-01 RSC-01 /042 W

----- 054828

R 161613Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 280

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 COPENHAGEN 0139

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, DA

SUBJECT: DANISH REACTION TO F-16 ANNOUNCEMENT

SUMMARY: DANISH NEWS MEDIA HAVE CARRIED EXTENSIVE COVERAGE OF THE USAF CHOICE OF THE YF-16 WITH EDITORIAL SUPPORT FOR THE DANISH PURCHASE OF IT. DISCUSSIONS WITH TWO KEY DANES CONCERNED WITH THE LIGHTWEIGHT FIGHTER QUESTION CONFIRMED THAT THOSE OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN THE CHOICE DO WANT THE AMERICAN AIRCRAFT. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR THE DANES TO SURMOUNT BEFORE ANY PURCHASE DECISION CAN BE MADE. END SUMMARY.

1. ALL DANISH DAILIES HAVE FEATURED COVERAGE OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE YF-16 HAD BEEN CHOSEN AS THE USAF AIR COMBAT FIGHTER OF THE 1980'S. THERE WAS ALSO CONSIDERABLE PRESS EMPHASIS ON THE ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES  
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PAGE 02 COPENH 00139 01 OF 02 161741Z

TO DENMARK WERE THE CONSORTIUM TO CHOOSE THE AMERICAN

AIRCRAFT. THIS INCLUDED THE ENUMERATION OF TWENTY DANISH COMPANIES THAT GENERAL DYNAMICS' GLASER SAID WOULD BENEFIT TO THE EXTENT OF AT LEAST \$300 MILLION IF THE EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM BOUGHT THE F-16. COPENHAGEN'S RESPECTED BERLINGSKE TIDENDE (INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE) EDITORIALY URGED SUCH A PURCHASE, POINTING OUT THE OBVIOUS ADVANTAGES TO DENMARK, OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CONSORTIUM AND NATO OF SUCH A CHOICE.

2. BASED ON SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS WITH A LEADING LIBERAL PARLIAMENTARIAN AND A KEY DANISH MOD OFFICIAL, IT APPEARS OBVIOUS THAT THE DANES, AT LEAST ON THE WORKING LEVEL, STRONGLY SUPPORT A DANISH PURCHASE OF THE F-16. BOTH DANISH SOURCES, HOWEVER, REITERATED THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE DANES TO FOCUS ON THE QUESTION UNTIL A NEW GOVERNMENT IS CONSTITUTED AND THE NEW PARLIAMENT HAS SHAKEN DOWN INTO COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS.

3. THE LIBERAL PARLIAMENTARIAN BELIEVED THAT THE DANISH DECISION ONLY AWAITED THE FULFILLMENT OF THE ABOVE CONDITIONS BEFORE IT WOULD BE ANNOUNCED. HE NOTED THAT THE RECENT PURCHASE OF 32 SWEDISH SAAB TRAINING AND OBSERVATION AIRCRAFT (DATT INTELLIGENCE REPORT 6-826-0021-75) "ACQUITTED" THE DANES OF NORDIC OBLIGATIONS.

4. THE MOD OFFICIAL, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS CONSIDERABLY MORE CAUTIOUS. HE POINTED OUT THE UNCERTAINTIES THAT THE NEW PARLIAMENT MIGHT POSE. THE FOUR PARTIES TO THE 1973-1977 DEFENSE AGREEMENT (LIBERALS, RADICALS, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND CONSERVATIVES) CONTINUE TO ENJOY A MAJORITY (118 OUT OF 179 SEATS) IN THE NEW HOUSE. BUT MOD BUREAUCRATS REMAIN UNEASY THAT PRESSURES EITHER FROM THE POLITICAL LEFT OR BASED ON DENMARK'S CRITICAL ECONOMIC SITUATION COULD FORCE THE UNFORTUNATE RE-OPENING OF THE QUESTION OF THE INVIOABILITY OF THE AGREEMENT. THIS COULD, IN TURN, LEAD TO INTERMINABLE DELAYS BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT WOULD, "IF EVER", BE IN A POSITION TO COMMIT DENMARK TO BUY ANY NEW FIGHTERS. THE MOD OFFICIAL INTERESTINGLY CHARACTERIZED THE RADICALS AS BEING MORE UNPREDICTABLE IN THIS RESPECT THAN THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 COPENH 00139 01 OF 02 161741Z

5. THE MOD OFFICIAL ALSO PROVIDED WHAT WAS FOR US THE FIRST INFORMATION ON THE NEW TIMETABLE AND MANDATE OF THE CONSORTIUM STEERING COMMITTEE. THE COMMITTEE, NOW IN BRUSSELS, IS STILL SEEKING FINAL DETAILS, "ESPECIALLY FROM THE AMERICANS", BEFORE IT CLOSES ITS DOORS TO ANY NEW INFORMATION THIS WEEK END. BETWEEN THEN AND THE MONTH'S END THE STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT WILL BE DRAFTED.

UNDER A NEW MANDATE FROM THE CONSORTIUM FOREIGN MINISTERS,  
THE COMMITTEE IS ENJOINED FROM RECOMMENDING THE PURCHASE  
OF ANY SPECIFIC AIRCRAFT BUT IS INSTEAD TO SUMMARIZE  
AND HIGHLIGHT THE RELEVANT TACTICAL AND ECONOMIC DATA  
WHICH WILL ALLOW THE MINISTERS THEMSELVES TO REACH SUCH  
A DECISION. THE MINISTERS ARE EXPECTED TO CONVENE IN  
BRUSSELS IN MID-FEBRUARY FOR THIS.

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PAGE 01 COPENH 00139 02 OF 02 161735Z

51

ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05

CIAE-00 PRS-01 EB-03 L-01 RSC-01 /042 W  
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R 161613Z JAN 75  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 281  
INFO SECDEF WASHDC  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM  
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE  
USCINCEUR  
USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 COPENHAGEN 0139

LIMDIS

6. THE MOD OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE DANES WERE OBVIOUSLY  
HOPEFUL THAT THE CONSORTIUM WOULD AGREE ON A SINGLE  
AIRCRAFT BUT FELT UNEASY THAT THE BELGIANS (AND PERHAPS  
THE DUTCH) WOULD CHOOSE THE MIRAGE. (HE SAID IN PASSING  
THAT THE FRENCH HAD PUT ON A "SPECTACULARLY STAGED" SHOW  
DURING HIS VISIT TO PARIS EARLIER THIS MONTH AND THAT ALL  
THE CONSORTIUM REPRESENTATIVES WERE IMPRESSED BY THE  
FLIGHT PERFORMANCE OF THE MIRAGE F-1.) IF THE CONSORTIUM  
FAILED TO STAY TOGETHER, HE SAID, THIS WOULD MEAN THAT  
THE COST TO THOSE WHO ULTIMATELY CHOSE THE AMERICAN

AIRCRAFT WOULD BE HIGHER AND THE ENTIRE DEAL WOULD HAVE TO BE RECAST. THIS WOULD, HOWEVER, GIVE THE DANISH DEFENSE MINISTER MORE TIME TO DO MISSIONARY WORK WITH MEMBERS OF THE NEW PARLIAMENT.

7. BOTH THE MOD OFFICIAL AND THE PARLIAMENTARIAN WERE CURIOUS ABOUT THE FATE OF THE YF-17 AND HOW ITS  
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PAGE 02 COPENH 00139 02 OF 02 161735Z

POTENTIAL PURCHASE BY THE USN OR OTHER COUNTRIES MIGHT AFFECT THE PRICE AND CONDITIONS OF A F-16 PURCHASE BY MEMBERS OF THE CONSORTIUM.

8. COMMENT: OF THE FOUR MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM, THE DANES HAVE ALWAYS REGARDED THEMSELVES AS THE LEAST COMMITTED TO MAKE ANY PURCHASE. THEIR PRESENT POSITION HAS NOT, OF COURSE, BEEN STRENGTHENED EITHER BY THE CURRENT POST-ELECTION DIFFICULTIES IN OBTAINING SUPPORT FOR A GOVERNMENT (WHICH MAY BE RELATIVELY WEAK) OR BY AN ECONOMIC SITUATION PROBABLY MORE CRITICAL THAN IN THE OTHER THREE CONSORTIUM COUNTRIES. DESPITE THESE PROBLEMS, MOST OF THOSE SERIOUSLY CONCERNED WITH DEFENSE QUESTIONS CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT DENMARK MUST OBTAIN A MODERN REPLACEMENT FOR ITS F-100'S AND THAT UNDULY DELAYING A DECISION WILL ONLY INCREASE THE EVENTUAL COST. THEREFORE, WE BELIEVE THAT THE CHANCES REMAIN GOOD THAT IN THE FINAL EVENT THE DANES WILL NOT OPT OUT OF THEIR AIR DEFENSE CAPABILITY AND THAT THE AIRCRAFT THEY CHOOSE WILL BE THE F-16.  
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